

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for authoring a plurality of digital image records, each digital image record corresponding to a separate customer order, in a digital image record authoring system including a dedicated computer, said method comprising:

a scanning step to scan a plurality of images corresponding to a separate customer order from a scanner into a plurality of digital images, the scanner being connected to the dedicated computer by a first interface bus;

a processing step to process the plurality of digital images and to combine the processed plurality of digital images into a record image; and

a writing step to write the record image by an image-recorder to a medium, the image-recorder being connected to the dedicated computer by a second interface bus;

wherein the scanning step is repeated, prior to completion of the writing step, to scan a new plurality of images corresponding to a new customer order from the scanner into a new plurality of digital images.

2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the processing step is repeated to process the new plurality of digital images and to combine the processed new plurality of digital images into a new record image.

3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the writing step is repeated to write the new record image to a new medium by the image-recorder, wherein the writing step for the new medium image is initiated after completion of the writing step for the previous record image.

4. A method according to Claim 3, wherein each record image is stored in an image-queue prior to being written to each respective medium by the writing step.

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5. A method according to Claim 4, wherein the writing step includes the step of obtaining, from image-queue, the record image to be written to the medium.

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6. A method according to Claim 4, wherein the image-queue is represented by an image-queue file.

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7. A method according to Claim 1, further including the steps of generating a print index file containing a thumbnail representation of each of the plurality of digital images and sending the print index file to a printer to print a corresponding print index.

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8. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the step of generating a print index file includes sending the print index file to a print queue and wherein the step of sending the print index file to the printer includes retrieving a next print index file from the print queue.

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9. A method according to Claim 8, wherein the print queue is represented by a print queue file.

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10. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the print index file is sent to the printer regardless of whether the record image corresponding to the plurality of digital images represented in

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the print index file has been written to the medium
in the writing step.

5 11. A method according to Claim 1, wherein
the writing step includes generating a write status
indicator which is used to indicate a success in the
event that the record image is successfully written
to the medium, and which is used to indicate an
error in the event that the record image is not
10 successfully written to the medium.

15 12. A method according to Claim 11,
wherein the writing step is not repeated for a new
record image if the write status indicator indicates
an error.

20 13. A method according to Claim 11,
wherein the writing step is repeated for the same
record image if the write status indicator indicates
an error.

25 14. A method according to Claim 11,
wherein the record image is compared to the medium
at the end of the writing step to determine if the
record image is successfully written to the medium.

30 15. A method according to Claim 1, wherein
the first interface bus is a SCSI interface and the
second interface bus is an IDE interface.

35 16. A method according to Claim 1, further
including the step of adjusting each of the
plurality of digital images which were scanned in
from the scanner.

 17. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes cropping.

18. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes rotating.

5 19. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes a contrast
adjustment.

10 20. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes a sharpness
adjustment.

21. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes a color adjustment.

15 22. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein the adjustment includes image editing.

20 23. A method according to Claim 16,
wherein a thumbnail representation of each of the
plurality of digital images is displayed on a
monitor connected to the computer, and wherein each
digital image is adjusted by a pointing device
connected to the computer.

25 24. A method according to Claim 1, wherein
the scanning step and processing step are performed
in a second computer which is connected to the
dedicated computer via a network, and the writing
step is performed in the dedicated computer.

30 25. A method according to Claim 1, wherein
a second computer is connected to the dedicated
computer, and wherein the scanning step and the
processing step are performed in the dedicated
35 computer and the writing step is performed in the
second computer.

26. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a CD-ROM.

5 27. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a DVD.

28. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a digital tape.

10 29. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a diskette.

30. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a digital mini-disc.

15 31. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a memory card.

20 32. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a memory chip.

33. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the medium is a memory storage device.

25 34. A method for authoring a plurality of digital image records, each digital image record corresponding to a separate customer order, in a digital image record authoring system including a dedicated computer, said method comprising:

30 a scanning step to scan a plurality of images corresponding to a separate customer order from a scanner into a plurality of digital images, the scanner being connected to the dedicated computer by a first interface bus;

35 a processing step to process the plurality of digital images and to combine the processed plurality of digital images into a record image; and

5 a writing step to write the record image by
an image-recorder to a medium, the image-recorder
being connected to the dedicated computer by a
second interface bus and the record image being
passed from the dedicated computer to the image-
recorder at a constant rate;

10 wherein the scanning step is repeated,
prior to completion of the writing step, to scan a
new plurality of images corresponding to a new
customer order from the scanner into a new plurality
of digital images.

15 35. A method for authoring a plurality of
digital image CD-ROMs, each digital image CD-ROM
corresponding to a separate customer order, in a
digital image CD-ROM authoring system including a
dedicated computer, said method comprising:

20 a scanning step to scan a plurality of
images corresponding to a separate customer order
from a scanner into a plurality of digital images,
the scanner being connected to the dedicated
computer by a first interface bus;

25 an adjusting step to adjust each of the
plurality of digital images which were scanned in
from the scanner;

a generating step to generate a print index
file containing a thumbnail representation of each
of the adjusted plurality of digital images, the
print index file for printing by a printer;

30 a processing step to process the plurality
of digital images and to combine the processed
plurality of digital images into a CD-ROM image; and

35 a CD-writing step to write the CD-ROM image
to a CD-ROM residing in a CD-recorder connected to
the dedicated computer by a second interface bus;

wherein the scanning step is repeated,
prior to completion of the CD-writing step, to scan

5 a new plurality of images corresponding to a new customer order from the scanner into a new plurality of digital images, the processing step is repeated to process the new plurality of digital images and to combine the processed new plurality of digital images into a new CD-ROM image, and the CD-writing step is repeated to write the new CD-ROM image to a new CD-ROM placed in the CD-recorder after completion of the CD-writing step for the previous
10 CD-ROM image.

15 36. A dedicated computer for authoring a plurality of digital image records, each digital image record corresponding to a separate customer order, in a digital image record authoring system comprised of the dedicated computer, a scanner connected to the dedicated computer by a first interface bus, and an image-recorder connected to the dedicated computer by a second interface bus,
20 comprising:

a program memory for storing process steps executable to perform a method according to any of Claims 1 to 35; and

25 a processor for executing the process steps stored in said program memory.

30 37. Computer-executable process steps stored on a computer readable medium, said computer-executable process steps for authoring a plurality of digital image records, each digital image record corresponding to a separate customer order, in a digital image record authoring system comprised of a dedicated computer, a scanner connected to the dedicated computer by a first interface bus, and an
35 image-recorder connected to the dedicated computer by a second interface bus, said computer-executable

process steps comprising process steps executable to perform a method according to any of Claims 1 to 35.

5 38. A computer-readable medium which
computer-executable process steps, the
plurality of digital image records, each digital
image record corresponding to a separate customer
10 order, in a digital image record authoring system
comprised of a dedicated computer, a scanner
connected to the dedicated computer by a first
interface bus, and an image-recorder connected to
the dedicated computer by a second interface bus,
15 said computer-executable process steps comprising
process steps executable to perform a method
according to any of Claims 1 to 35.